



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Contact: Ann Riedesel (208) 524-8484

Groundbreaking for Idaho Treatment Facility

Local and state elected officials, leaders from the U.S. Department of Energy, and representatives of BNFL Inc. and its partners gathered Monday to break ground for the Advanced Mixed Waste Treatment Facility. The ceremonial turning of earth at the Idaho National Engineering and Environmental Laboratory was the latest step in preparing 65,000 cubic meters of plutonium-contaminated waste for shipment out of Idaho.

Speakers at the groundbreaking ceremony included Dr. Carolyn Huntoon, DOE's Assistant Secretary for Environmental Management. "This is an extremely important project for us," Dr. Huntoon said. The AMWTP "is the next step for INEEL to meet its environmental cleanup mission."

BNFL Inc. and its partners will begin field activities on Tuesday. The facility is due to be completed by December 21, 2002.

"BNFL is getting ready to run the yellow iron, starting tomorrow," Paul Miskimin, President of BNFL Inc. said. "We appreciate the opportunity to reduce the environmental risk, to serve our client -- and also, the people of Idaho."

Prior to commencing construction, a series of seven permits and authorizations were required. The final environmental permits became effective August 18, 2000.

Seth Beal, Butte County Commissioner, welcomed DOE, BNFL and its partners. "This is an investment in our future, as well as the future of America."

The treatment facility is a cornerstone for helping to meet U.S. Department of Energy commitments to remove nuclear waste from Idaho. The BNFL Inc.-led project includes designing, building, and operating the facility. The privatized, fixed-price contract was awarded in December 1996.

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